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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 9110  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 2541  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5126  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1406  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1225  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - ISG REPORT - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Friday morning's Yomiuri front-paged an exclusive interview Thursday with Okinawa Governor-elect Nakaima in Naha, during which he expressed flexibility toward a GOJ plan to relocate the functions of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Camp Schwab.

11. "President Bush Should Immediately Act on ISG Report"  
The liberal Asahi editorialized (12/8): "While pointing out numerous US policy mistakes committed since the start of the war, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (ISG) proposed that President Bush should change his policy in that country.... We agree with the report's proposal. Robert Gates, who won Senate approval as the next defense secretary on the same day the ISG submitted the report to

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President Bush, admitted that the Bush administration mismanaged some US operations in Iraq. The president should now move to substantially change his Iraq policy. We also agree with the basic direction of the ISG report. Although the report did not touch on specific procedures regarding a US withdrawal, it specified the goal of recalling troops and a timetable for doing so. This is significant in that the continued presence of US troops is worsening the situation rather than improving it. A declaration that the US will not remain in the country forever will be effective in alleviating anti-American sentiment both in and outside Iraq."

12. "ISG Report a Map out of Iraq Chaos?" An editorial in the top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri observed (12/8): "...Saying that present US policy in Iraq is not functioning, former Secretary of State Baker and other members of the bipartisan ISG came up with 79 recommendations to break the Iraq deadlock. President

Bush said he would consider the recommendations in a serious manner and come up with a new policy in several weeks. The question is what the contents of a new Iraq policy will be.... If the Bush administration follows the ISG's proposals, the phased withdrawal of 140,000 US troops in Iraq will start as early as next year. This is tantamount to accepting calls from Democrats for an early withdrawal. Nevertheless, the administration has rejected calls for an immediate pullout, saying that this would lead to further bloodshed or anarchy."

13. "US Exit Strategy Needs Multilateral Modifications"  
The business-oriented Nihon Keizai editorialized (12/8):  
"...The recommendations from the ISG were just proposals for discussion. In reality, it is the Bush administration that will decide how to change US policy in Iraq.... President Bush needs to realize that it is difficult to give shape to and implement some of the ISG policy options submitted to him.... It will be worth seriously considering a proposal that the US build a multilateral framework, invite Iran and Syria to take part, and engage these countries in a serious manner. The reconstruction of Middle East peace is imperative to improve the regional environment surrounding Iraq. Inasmuch as former Secretary of State Baker said there was no 'magic

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formula' to resolve the situation, the US should resort to as many policy options as possible to break the stalemate."

SCHIEFFER